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New York

President:	Mr. Akram	(Pakistan)
Members:	Algeria	Mr. Baali
	Angola	Mr. Gaspar Martins
	Benin	Mr. Adechi
	Brazil	Mr. Sardenberg
	Chile	Mr. Maquieira
	China	Mr. Cheng Jingye
	France	Mr. De La Sablière
	Germany	Mr. Pleuger
	Philippines	Mr. Baja
	Romania	Mr. Motoc
	Russian Federation	Mr. Konuzin
	Spain	Mr. Menéndez
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Thomson
	United States of America	Mr. Cunningham

Agenda

Briefing by the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

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04-34166 (E)

The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Briefing by the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

The President: In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Solomon Passy, Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

On behalf of the Council, I extend a warm welcome to the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria, Mr. Solomon Passy, and invite him to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Security Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Solomon Passy, Chairman-in-Office of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe and Minister for Foreign Affairs of Bulgaria. I have great pleasure now in giving him the floor.

Mr. Passy: It is a pleasure to be back in the Security Council.

As members will recall, Bulgaria was a non-permanent Council member in 2002 and 2003. That was a busy time for my country. But there has been no pause since then, as at the time when we rotated out of the Security Council we had already assumed the chairmanship of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

I congratulate Pakistan on its assumption of the presidency of the Security Council and commend Germany for its successful leadership as President in April.

In my remarks today, I will focus on the role of the OSCE and what the chairmanship of the OSCE is engaged in nowadays. The low-key, soft-security nature of OSCE work rarely gains public attention, but that does not diminish its importance. The presence of the Chairman-in-Office in the Security Council is yet further proof of that.

As members know, since 1992, the OSCE — at the time, the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) — has been a regional arrangement as described in Chapter VIII of the United Nations Charter. Close and expanding cooperation with the United Nations, the European Union, NATO and other regional organizations is a priority for the Bulgarian chairmanship. With its specific expertise and with the unique activities that it implements from Vancouver to Vladivostok, the OSCE is a special partner of the United Nations.

The roots of our organization go back more than 30 years, to the CSCE and the Helsinki process, which meant so much to me and my generation as we struggled to win basic human rights in what were then communist countries. I believe that the OSCE has much to be proud of in its relatively short history. The CSCE was a catalyst for ending the cold war by keeping the focus on human rights, encouraging greater openness and transparency, stressing arms control and uniting Europe.

The OSCE, as the largest security organization in Europe, helped to end civil war in Tajikistan, constrained conflict in the Republic of Macedonia, Moldova and Georgia and defused inter-ethnic conflict in a number of States. With the United Nations, the OSCE continues to play a major role in building civil society in post-conflict Bosnia and Kosovo.

With its unique comprehensive approach to security — stressing human rights and economic development as well as political-military issues — the OSCE remains the primary instrument for early warning, conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation in its region. Our 18 OSCE field missions, especially in countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia, represent an invaluable on-the-ground presence which can help us deal more effectively with new threats to security.

Addressing and preventing the most salient threats to security are a high priority for the Bulgarian chairmanship as it builds on the efforts of its

predecessors. I would like especially to underline the role of my predecessor Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, the Chairman-in-Office in 2003.

Take, for example, counter-terrorism. The OSCE is looking at practical issues such as travel document security, the threat of man-portable shoulder-fired missiles to civilian aviation and improving ways of stopping the financing of terrorism. Work is being done to destroy ammunition stockpiles to eliminate the possibility of their ending up in the wrong hands. The OSCE works closely with the Council's Counter-Terrorism Committee. Indeed, in March the OSCE hosted, in cooperation with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, the third special meeting of the Counter-Terrorism Committee with international, regional and subregional organizations.

We do not limit ourselves to worthy statements of intent. We bring together the practitioners — experts in airport security, for example, or people who design and produce passports — to enable them to share experiences and best practices. This is practical work which should make it harder for terrorists to threaten civilian aircraft with portable missiles or to cross international frontiers using forged passports and identity cards.

Furthermore, the OSCE is coordinating assistance on the ratification and implementation of 12 United Nations conventions and protocols on anti-terrorism. We are also trying to ensure that anti-terrorism legislation does not compromise human rights and are therefore working with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime to assist OSCE States in drafting national anti-terrorism legislation. That is in line with Security Council resolution 1373 (2001).

The OSCE is working to control the spread of small arms and light weapons. Last December, we were proud to present the OSCE's Handbook of Best Practices on Small Arms and Light Weapons to Ambassador Kuniko Inoguchi of Japan, representing the United Nations. Today, many more people are at risk from illegally-held small arms and light weapons than from weapons of mass destruction. These weapons are easily concealed, are portable and have often been diverted from legal possession through illegal channels. In the wrong hands, they can be used by terrorists, criminal groups and sometimes, with terrifying effect, by children caught up in civil conflict as irregular forces. Too often, such small weapons can turn disagreements into violent conflicts with devastating consequences. The OSCE's regional work provides substantial input for the United Nations Programme of Action on the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons.

Given the ever present threat from crime, policing is high on our agenda. The OSCE has quickly and effectively built up expertise in community policing, particularly in multi-ethnic societies. We have trained police in the Republic of Macedonia and in Kosovo, where recruits join the United Nations-led Kosovo Police Service. The OSCE is also implementing a police assistance programme in Kyrgyzstan and is formulating programmes to assist Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan in reforming police culture and operational effectiveness. In the future, more attention will also be paid to crime intelligence. We need to do more to break the link between crime and conflict.

Policing is a perfect OSCE issue — bringing together security and human rights — and we can play a lead role. The rule of law needs to be enforced in a way that is proportionate and professional and that has the respect of the community. When handled badly, policing can be part of the problem. When there is effective, democratically controlled policing, societies are more stable and more integrated. We should not wait until crises deteriorate to the point where peacekeeping is required. We should do more to strengthen policing within States where necessary, with the support of the international community.

Border management and security constitute another area to which the OSCE is paying greater attention. As Europe is transformed, borders are becoming more open. At the same time, that openness is being exploited by traffickers of drugs, people and weapons. There are also issues, such as pollution, development and water management, that defy borders and that therefore require regional cooperation. The challenge is to facilitate legitimate cross-border travel and commerce, protecting human rights and promoting human contacts, while ensuring a level of security that is commensurate with the threats posed by illegal cross-border activities. Those factors are being considered in the elaboration of an OSCE border management and security strategy. Those issues will also be the topic of a conference on borders to be held with the United Nations in Vienna in September.

The OSCE is paying increasing attention to fighting trafficking, particularly trafficking in human beings. I will shortly be appointing the first special representative on combating trafficking in human beings to increase the OSCE's capacities in that important work.

Last December, the Maastricht Ministerial Council adopted a new OSCE Strategy Document which provides recommendations and commitments for addressing economic and environmental threats to security and stability in the OSCE region. To implement the strategy, we are working closely with the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe, particularly when it comes to reviewing the implementation of commitments and the development of early warning mechanisms and indicators. In fact, an inter-secretariat task force has been created to that effect. We also work closely with the United Nations Environment Programme and the United Nations Development Programme on our common Environment and Security Initiative, which is designed to assess key environmental issues relevant for security in South-Eastern Europe, Central Asia and the Caucasus.

The human dimension remains at the heart of the OSCE's activities. Recent OSCE election-monitoring operations, in Georgia and the Republic of Macedonia for example, once again demonstrate the importance of expert, objective international observers. Election monitoring and assisting OSCE States with democratization are core activities of the Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights. The OSCE's Representative on Freedom of the Media is a unique watchdog who monitors media freedom in the OSCE area. Free media are vital in open societies. With freedom comes responsibility — for example, in relation to hate speech on the Internet. Those are the types of contemporary issues that the OSCE is addressing.

Tolerance, non-discrimination and integration remain key themes for the OSCE. In Berlin recently we had a high-profile conference on anti-Semitism that provided a valuable opportunity to see what concrete steps can be taken to better address that scourge in the OSCE area. I would like to thank in particular the German Foreign Minister, Joschka Fischer, for supporting the organization of that conference. Our participating States agreed to compile, share and make public reliable statistics on incidents of anti-Semitism and other hate crimes, to review their legislation and to pay more attention to education on tolerance. We are working with, among others, the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination.

We are also implementing an Action Plan on Improving the Situation of Roma and Sinti in the OSCE Area. Furthermore, we intend to evaluate what more can be done to combat violent manifestations of racism, xenophobia and discrimination. Those forces are still evident across the OSCE region, and they need to be contained. Also evident is the threat of extreme nationalism and inter-ethnic conflict. Here, the High Commissioner on National Minorities continues to play a discreet and valuable role. Increasingly, his work involves projects, including some carried out in cooperation with United Nations agencies.

In cooperation with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, among others, we are paying attention to education and its important role in building tolerance and inter-cultural understanding.

The OSCE and the United Nations work well together in the field. In Kosovo, the OSCE is an integral part of the structure of the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK). Immediately after the recent flare-up of violence, on 22 March, I and the Secretary General of NATO, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, visited Pristina, thus demonstrating the determination to take the most effective measures possible in restoring order and normal life in the province. We expressed our full support for UNMIK and KFOR.

The Bulgarian chairmanship has no doubts — and made it clear to the parties — that the implementation of the international community's "standards before status" policy with regard to Kosovo should be strictly followed. That policy was reconfirmed during the open meeting of the Security Council held on 13 April and in the statement of the President of the Council on Kosovo issued on 30 April 2004 (S/PRST/2004/13). The Provisional Institutions of Self-Government should honour their commitments and "ensure that acts of violence and threats are not repeated". Multi-ethnicity and reconciliation should be rebuilt throughout Kosovo in an urgent manner.

On 23 March in Belgrade, I discussed with Government representatives the events in Kosovo and the situation in Serbia and Montenegro. In my

meetings, I stated that the international community highly appreciated the Government's wise approach to the developments in Kosovo and its prompt reaction to the unrest in Belgrade, Nis and other places.

The recent violence in Kosovo has shown once again that the international community — most notably the United Nations, NATO, the European Union (EU) and the OSCE — must act in concert so that the progress there can be maintained and can become truly sustainable.

On 13 and 14 April 2004, a regular regional meeting of the heads of OSCE missions in the countries of the western Balkans was held in Sofia. The meeting was devoted to considering how to better streamline the functioning of the OSCE field presences in the countries of the western Balkans. The situation in Kosovo, the fight against terrorism and illegal trafficking, the strengthening of border control, refugee returns, education and the training of young people were high on the meeting's agenda. Particular attention was devoted to problems related to education and the media.

Developments in Georgia have brought into sharper focus the relations between the United Nations and the OSCE in that country. The OSCE supports the efforts of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia to bring about a comprehensive political settlement of the conflict in Abkhazia. The OSCE stands ready to help with opening the Ghali branch of the United Nations Human Rights Office in Sukhumi. In South Ossetia, the OSCE works closely with the United Nations Development Programme and with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees in the implementation of rehabilitation and repatriation projects within the framework of an EU grant to the OSCE.

Given the latest developments in Ajara, I congratulated President Saakashvili, the people of Georgia and the Government on achieving a peaceful settlement of the situation in Ajara. The Bulgarian chairmanship will continue to assist vigorously in strengthening democratic institutions in Georgia for the benefit of all citizens. I am pleased to note the constructive role played by the Russian Federation — particularly by Igor Ivanov — in settling the crisis situation. We stress the importance of restoring Georgia's territorial integrity by peaceful means as a crucial prerequisite for the country's democratization and prosperity, as well as for the stability of the southern Caucasus. We hope that the peaceful resolution of the crisis in Ajara will stimulate new efforts to resolve the conflicts in South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

Following up on its support for democratic elections, the OSCE is committed to working with the Georgian Government to continue the process of democratic reform and to maintain the country's territorial integrity by peaceful means. After my visit to Georgia, I also visited Armenia and Azerbaijan, where — as the Council is aware — the OSCE has been working with the parties to seek a resolution of the Nagorny Karabakh conflict. As I said at the time, the OSCE cannot perform miracles. It is up to the parties themselves to find the necessary courage and to realize that they share an interest in long-term peace and stability. However, the OSCE is committed to providing further suggestions and to facilitating a substantial dialogue aimed at bringing about mutually beneficial results. The longer the conflict persists, the more complex it becomes; here, time is no one's friend.

As Western and Central Europe have demonstrated, most recently by EU enlargement, regional cooperation can be a catalyst for confidence-building, good-neighbourly relations and prosperity. That is a message that I spread to my colleagues in South-Eastern Europe, and it is a point that I have raised in visits to the Caucasus and to Central Asia.

In that respect, I believe that Central Asia's security and Afghanistan's future are closely interlinked. In April, after visiting all five Central Asian republics, I flew to Kabul for meetings with President Karzai and Foreign Minister Abdullah. The OSCE has plenty of experience to share on issues relevant to the future of a stable Afghanistan. I believe that the OSCE and the United Nations can work more closely with the States in the region to promote regional security, stability and cooperation.

The OSCE is active in a wide range of areas, and we have good working relations with the United Nations. I believe that we can do even more. The OSCE will continue to cooperate with major international players — the EU, NATO and the United Nations — with the aim of improving their ability to respond quickly and effectively in addressing major contemporary challenges.

There is more room for sharing the OSCE's experience with other parts of the world, particularly in areas adjacent to our region. OSCE institutions and commitments may be inspirational to others who, like us, are searching for ways to prevent conflict, improve bilateral and regional relations and live in secure, pluralistic and lawful societies. That has been the OSCE's aim for the past 30 years. And while the world has changed since the cold war and the Helsinki Final Act, we still face threats and challenges to security between and within States. That is why the OSCE continues to adapt and to work to build security through cooperation.

The President: I thank Mr. Solomon Passy for his briefing and for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. Cunningham (United States of America): I want to thank Mr. Passy for joining us today and for giving us that overview of the activities of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). I want to commend him also for his effective and active chairmanship of that important, if not widely understood, organization, an organization that I spent some part of my career working with.

I am glad to note in his statement the references to strong United Nations-OSCE cooperation. We think that is very important and welcome. In particular, of the items that he raised, I think the OSCE conference on anti-Semitism that was just held and the intention to nominate a representative for trafficking in persons are very welcome initiatives.

Mr. Passy spoke about developing an OSCE border management and security strategy and about a meeting that the OSCE is organizing in Vienna in September on that subject. I understand that the United Nations will be involved in the event as well, as will other organizations. What sort of outcome is Mr. Passy hoping for or anticipating from that session, and what will future activities be?

Mr. Pleuger (Germany): I should like to thank Mr. Passy for his interesting and very comprehensive briefing. We feel that the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) plays an important role in the field of security and cooperation in Europe and in adjacent regions, not only as a forum for consultation, but also in a concrete manner where it runs field operations. As Mr. Passy pointed out, there are significant areas of fruitful cooperation between the United Nations and the OSCE, specifically in the areas of conflict prevention, crisis management and post-conflict rehabilitation. Perhaps Mr. Passy could give us more details and more clarification about where he sees options for enhanced cooperation between the OSCE and the United Nations in the area of conflict prevention and early warning.

As for a second question, we believe that in the specific context of peacekeeping, cooperation and burden-sharing with regional arrangements and organizations make it easier for the United Nations to become active in many regions. That is, of course, true not only for the OSCE, but also, for example, for the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States. The regional organizations very often have in-depth knowledge of a conflict and of the specific problems of the area. We therefore support close cooperation between the OSCE and the United Nations and welcome every effort to increase the flow of information between the organizations, as we are witnessing today at this briefing. Therefore, we would be interested to hear from Mr. Passy where he sees areas for intensified cooperation between the two organizations in the near future.

Mr. Konuzin (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): I too am glad to welcome Mr. Passy to this Council meeting. In Russia we value highly the close cooperation between the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). From the Council agenda alone, we could refer to Tajikistan; Abkhazia, Georgia; Macedonia; and Bosnia and Herzegovina. We especially note the OSCE contribution to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1244 (1999) on Kosovo, Serbia and Montenegro. The OSCE mission in that province, along with the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), is playing an important role in preparing for local elections and in establishing the multi-ethnic Kosovo Police Service, as well as in the observance of human rights and the monitoring of local media.

The OSCE has provided us with very good reports, with preliminary analysis of the activities of the Kosovo print and electronic mass media during the broad-based, ethnically motivated violence that took place in Kosovo between 17 and 20 March. It is well known that, as many local mass media took a very negative stance, propaganda was broadcast. Anti-Serbian views were propagated and highly tendentious and inflammatory materials were distributed, which did

not promote tolerance, but rather encouraged ethnic cleansing in the province.

In that connection, I would like to hear what steps Mr. Passy intends to take within the OSCE Mission in Kosovo to prevent future repetition of extremist manifestations in the local media of Kosovo.

Mr. Motoc (Romania): My delegation is, of course, more than pleased to welcome to the Council the Chairman-in-Office of the Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Foreign Minister Passy of Bulgaria, a friendly neighbour of Romania with which we share common institutional experiences in the assumption of international responsibilities. It seems that wherever Romania has exercised a mandate, Bulgaria has succeeded it, and that wherever Bulgaria has done so, Romania was next in line. I take the opportunity therefore to commend Bulgaria for activities and achievements of its chairmanship during the first four months of its mandate.

The rich presentation we heard at the beginning of our meeting shows eloquently the usefulness of periodic interaction between the universal Organization, and the Security Council in particular, and regional organizations, especially when their respective agendas intersect. Romania has made the relationship between global and regional organizations in stabilization processes a main thread of its mandate as an elected member of the Security Council. We truly hope to see Foreign Minister Passy, as OSCE Chairman-in-Office, join the high-level debate on this topic, which we plan to organize during our July presidency.

Romania held the chairmanship-in-office of the OSCE fairly recently — in 2001 — and had opportunities then to explore areas for improving the operational relationship on the ground between the United Nations and the OSCE. We now have a very good opportunity to put that institutional synergy to work even more effectively, especially in the western Balkans, since two neighbouring countries of the region — Bulgaria and Romania — are currently chairing, respectively, the OSCE and the South-East European Cooperation Process, which is the most representative subregional organization.

With a view to best profiting from the presence of our guest, I would like to ask him to kindly elaborate on the strategy and thoughts of the OSCE chairmanship-in-office with regard to dealing with so-called frozen conflicts, such as the ones he briefly referred to in the first part of his rich remarks — he mentioned Moldova and Georgia — since in that respect the United Nations and the OSCE, we think, can successfully share experiences and ideas.

Mr. De La Sablière (France) (*spoke in French*): I should like in turn to thank Mr. Passy for his presence and for his statement here today. We listened most attentively to his statement on the activities of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which will certainly prove of great use to us.

At a time when the Security Council and the United Nations are increasingly called upon to intervene to resolve regional conflicts that arise every day on the Council's agenda, I believe that we are seeking increasingly close cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations. I wish simply to join colleagues who have spoken before me in asking for Minister Passy's opinion about what activities could be undertaken to strengthen cooperation between the United Nations and OSCE. We want to take advantage of his presence and experience to further enrich our thinking.

The President: In my own national capacity, I should like to add a couple of questions to those posed to Minister Passy.

Of course, there are a number of issues dealt with by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) that are coterminous with the issues dealt with in the Security Council and in other organizations to which Pakistan belongs, such as the Organization of the Islamic Conference.

In this context, I was very interested to note Mr. Passy's comment that OSCE and the United Nations can work more closely with States in the region bordering Afghanistan to promote regional security, stability and cooperation. I wonder whether OSCE has any specific thoughts on such cooperation, which would naturally be of great interest to us.

He also mentioned that OSCE has been working with the parties to seek a resolution on Nagorny Karabakh. I still remember how, 10 years ago when Pakistan was a member of this Council, we participated in the elaboration and adoption of several resolutions — 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993), all adopted during and after the conflict. Almost 10 years, I believe, have since elapsed; 12 May

will be the tenth anniversary of the ceasefire. We wonder how OSCE intends to pursue the proposals which have been made to seek a resolution of this conflict, in conformity with the resolutions of the Security Council, and whether any specific plans or proposals are on the table in this context.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council.

I call on Minister Passy to respond to any of our remarks.

Mr. Passy: I will try to respond. Thank you, Sir, for this really unique opportunity to respond to the Security Council members.

First, in response to Ambassador Cunningham's question on our conception of anti-trafficking and border controls, we can learn a lot from what is being done in the Balkans. We have great experience in this area and we can apply it in the future. The most important thing for the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) is to learn from our past experience; we really have great experience that we can apply in new areas. Of course, everything depends, as all know, on funding, but the proper allocation of financial resources might help in that direction.

Our main focus in past years — financially speaking, looking through the budget of OSCE — was the Balkans and not so much the Caucasus or Central Asia. I believe that the time has come when we can think of reallocating attention. Now that the situation in the Balkans has relatively calmed down, we can reallocate attention to Central Asia and the Caucasus.

This is more or less the answer to Ambassador Pleuger's question on conflict prevention and what OSCE can do in that direction. With respect to early warning, what is very important in the area of Central Asia and the Caucasus is, first, to stimulate the countries into talking to each other. I have to confess that the dialogue between the countries in those two regions is broken. We need to encourage them to sit together and talk together. That is the first thing that we shall have to do.

The countries there have to address three specific groups of problems. The first represents the problems related to democratization. The second represents problems related to fighting terrorism. The third represents the problems related to internal tensions that they have to resolve or suppress. The leaderships of those countries do not always have the capacity to address those three groups of problems simultaneously. That is why we have to encourage them to share their experience and best practices with each other so that they can learn from each other. I think that will be one of the big challenges facing OSCE and the international community in the future. OSCE cannot do this alone, but it can stimulate.

As to OSCE and the United Nations in Afghanistan and Iraq, this is, I would say, one the best opportunities for visionary thinking and cooperation between OSCE and the United Nations. OSCE can help a lot and bring its expertise to bear in both of those countries. We have expertise in monitoring elections; we have expertise in police training; we have expertise in building democratic institutions. All of these elements are desperately needed both in Afghanistan and Iraq and we are ready to respond to a request by the United Nations to serve, if it so wishes.

That is why I would suggest that, in a future resolution on Iraq, the Security Council consider the possibility of specially mentioning a future role for OSCE, along with other international organizations. That is, of course, up to the Council to decide. Moreover, speaking of future resolutions on Iraq, I would draw the Council's attention to the possibility of inviting other regional organizations to support the building of democracy there. In particular, I mean such organizations as the Organization of the Islamic Conference, the League of Arab States or the Gulf States. We should not limit the activities of the international community only to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), OSCE, the European Union and so on. We need the organizations that involve Arab and Islamic countries also to be taken on board and involved in this very important process.

In response to Ambassador Konuzin of the Russian Federation, as he certainly knows, what happens in Kosovo is of immediate concern not only to me, as Chairman-in-Office, but also to me in my national capacity. The distance between the border of Bulgaria and the border of Kosovo is only 60 kilometers, so any turbulence in Kosovo immediately reflects at home. We hear it. That is why we reacted immediately and, after the violence in Kosovo, the Secretary General of NATO, Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, and I agreed on a joint visit. We visited the region and we very strongly condemned all acts of violence.

OSCE is working in Kosovo under the United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo, and Harri Holkeri is the person who is giving the ultimate guidance. That is why I would not restrict our attention only to media, as you have asked. That is very important, but we should not restrict ourselves only to media. We should address all forms of violence and the inspirations for violence.

We talked to the Kosovo leaders, who have — or are supposed to have — some influence on their respective media. The Secretary General of NATO and I told them clearly that no one should benefit and no one will be allowed to benefit from the violence in the region.

In response to Ambassador Motoc, my dear friend, colleague and neighbour from Romania — we still remember Romania's great chairmanship of the OSCE in 2001 — as far as Moldova is concerned, we are sparing no effort in encouraging the sides to work together. We are inviting the three-sided and five-sided formats, but we cannot do more than what the two sides that are directly involved are ready to do. We shall spare no effort in encouraging them. I would like to address to the members of the Security Council to focus as countries, to encourage the sides in the conflict to act appropriately.

Also, I have very recent information concerning Kosovo. There is a report on the role of the media by my newly appointed representative, Mr. Haraszti. We needed such a person to do the job, and obviously he is starting to do his job.

Regarding the remarks of Ambassador Jean-Marc de La Sablière of France, I already spoke of the cooperation between the United Nations and the OSCE. I would just mention that we need more encouragement from the Security Council. Just ask us to do the job and we are ready to do the job.

The OSCE is, in one respect, a much more difficult organization that the Security Council. I had experience in the Security Council during the past two years. Here there are only five countries that can veto a resolution. In my case, it is much more difficult. There are 55 countries that can exercise the veto. When I visited President Karzai of Afghanistan, and I told him those are the regulations — any single country can veto my proposal — he told me, "Oh, that is like the Loya Jirga." I responded, "Mr. President, OSCE is my Loya Jirga."

If we have the encouragement, support and leadership of the Security Council, we will have a much more effective organization, because, if you can agree between yourselves here, I can promise that your agreement here will be passed in the OSCE.

Finally, our Chairman mentioned Nagorny Karabakh. I visited Nagorny Karabakh and had the chance to speak to all parties to the conflict on the Azari side and the Armenian side. My general conclusion is that we have to encourage them to talk to each other more. We should tell both sides that time is not everybody's ally. My impression is that there is a misunderstanding that time is everybody's ally. On the contrary, it is everybody's enemy. The more we postpone the solution to the conflict, the more painful the solution will be.

I would especially like to mention here, to the Security Council, that after our visit to Azerbaijan and our talk with President Aliyev, he was kind enough to release 129 prisoners. He told me that he wanted to prove that he wanted his country to democratize. On the very next day he offered very real proof that he meant what he said.

Those are my brief comments and responses to your questions. If the Council would permit me now, I would not like to miss this extraordinary opportunity to touch upon one very painful question, which I would like to address in my national capacity.

We have six Bulgarian doctors who were caught up in Libya, in jail, almost six years ago. Only yesterday five of them were sentenced to death.

Bulgaria was a co-sponsor of the Security Council resolution lifting the sanctions on Libya, and we believe that this was the right thing to do. Now I believe we will all have to help Libya to resolve this painful question, because, since those death penalties, this issue has become even more difficult for Libya than for Bulgaria. I just wanted to inform the Council that all of us will have to help in order for that humanitarian case to be resolved.

The President: I thank His Excellency Mr. Solomon Passy for his responses to the questions and comments made by Council members, and for his participation in the Security Council.

There are no more speakers on my list.

The meeting was adjourned at 11.10 a.m.